

REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE DUST,
AND TO DUST
YOU SHALL RETURN.”



GENESIS 3:19

The Olive Branch

Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Sunday Readings

March 9, 2025

First Sunday in Lent, year C

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Romans 10:8b-13

Luke 4:1-13

March 16, 2025

Second Sunday in Lent, year C

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm 27

Philippians 3:17 – 4:1

Luke 13:31-35

*In the
presence of God.
Being the
presence of God.*

Accent on Worship

Vicar Natalie Wussler

When I think about “wilderness”, I think of Snow White running through the woods, scared out of her mind. With frights-a-plenty, she sees evil looking eyes fixed on her from every corner, and each scare drives her further into an all out panic attack, finishing with an oh so graceful Disney princess fall-and-cry moment. But as soon as she looks up, it turns out all those eyes were actually kind woodland creatures, warped by the shadows of the woods, and she comes back to center.

We go through times of wilderness all the time, whether it's the middle of a job search, infertility struggles, grief, getting through seminary (of which I am all too familiar), the continuing turmoil present in politics, etc. There's a lot of wilderness in this life. Moments where we need to ask ourselves where we're going, how we're going to get out on the other side into the Promised Land. Where we fear every obstacle and every unknown that comes our way. We become so focused on our “Promised Land” that we don't accurately see what's in front of us now, and where God is leading us, how God is providing for us, who God is putting on our path as we journey through life. What if we stayed present in the wilderness, painful as it may be? What would we see? And how would we be transformed? And to what new possibilities would it lead?

This Sunday, we see two accounts of wilderness moments, the Israelites searching for the promised land and Jesus being tested. Both have their share of testing and hardship, but in both cases, God makes Godself abundantly known.

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Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*

For the Israelites, God provided quail and manna to ease their hunger, and in our Deuteronomy reading, God has molded these Israelites to be the holy nation they need to be to enter the promised land. And in Jesus' case, the Holy Spirit was with him the entire time, giving him the resolve to resist the temptation, choosing to remain steadfast the entire way. Were these times in the wilderness easy? No. Were they pleasant? Probably not, but God showed up in the wilderness and provided. God shows up in our time of wilderness too, giving us the strength and resolve to carry on despite the fear we may have, transforming us into people made for the time that we are in.

- Vicar Natalie Wussler

Lent Begins

Ash Wednesday Eucharists, with the Imposition of Ashes, will be offered at Noon and 7:00 p.m.

Lent Procession will be offered this Sunday, March 9, at 4 pm. This is a liturgy of lessons and carols for the season of Lent, sponsored by Mount Olive Music and Fine Arts.

All are welcome!

Midweek Lenten Worship

Wednesdays in Lent

Holy Eucharist at Noon,
followed by Soup Luncheon

Vespers at 7:00 pm,
preceded by Soup Supper at 6 pm

All are welcome.

Way of the Cross

With the coming of Lent comes the return of the Way of the Cross. As we began last year, visual representations of the nine Stations of the Cross we observe on Good Friday will surround the assembly in the nave this season. Some pieces are new, others will be familiar from last year. As you have time, take a few moments to ponder each work. Does it inspire consonance or dissonance in you? Why might that be? How might God be speaking in you through this artwork and your reactions to it?

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, March 5 - Ash Wednesday

- 9:00 am Staff meeting
Noon *Ash Wednesday Eucharist*
5:30 pm Children's Choirs supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
7:00 pm *Ash Wednesday Eucharist*
NO Cantorei rehearsal this evening

Thursday, March 6

- 9:30 am *Morning Prayer*
7:00 pm MIRAC meeting
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Friday, March 7

- 7:00 pm Recovery Group

Saturday, March 8

- 10:00 am Book Discussion group

Sunday, March 9 - First Sunday in Lent

- 8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
9:30 am Adult Forum/Godly Play/
Youth Conversation
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and conversation
4:00 pm *Lent Procession*

Monday, March 10

- 5:30 pm Family Music Time (online only)
7:00 pm Monday Night WAVE (N.A.)

Tuesday, March 11

- Noon Bible Study

Wednesday, March 12

- 9:00 am Staff meeting
Noon *Midweek Lenten Eucharist*
1:00 pm Soup Luncheon
5:30 pm Children's Choirs supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
6:00 pm Soup Supper
7:00 pm *Midweek Lenten Vespers*
7:35 pm Cantorei rehearsal

Tuesday Noon Bible Study Link

The Tuesday Noon Bible Study meets weekly in person in the East Assembly Room. For those who are unable to come in person, the Bible Study is held over Zoom as well.

The link for the Tuesday noon Bible study will be the same every week. To join from your computer, tablet, or smartphone, [click here](#).

Book Discussion

On March 8, the group will discuss *Because of Winn Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo in celebration of the 25th anniversary of this Minnesota author's award winning. In April, the discussion will travel to Nigeria to consider *Under the Udala Trees* by Chinelo Okparanta.

Everyone is invited to join whenever you are able, at 10 a.m. in the library, usually on the second Saturday of the month. The group has been using Zoom to provide remote access to the sessions. If you would like to participate in the group, you can either attend the monthly sessions which meet at the church in person or join remotely via Zoom. To join from your computer, tablet, or smart phone, [click here](#).

Soup Makers Needed!

If you are able to help with soup and bread for one of the Wednesday Lenten Soup Meals, please sign up on the chart provided in the East Assembly Room. Typically, about 25-35 guests attend the midday meal that is served at about 1:00 pm, following the noon Eucharist. The evening meal runs between 10-15 guests and is served at 6 pm, prior to Evening Vespers. All meals are served in the East Assembly Room.

Upcoming Adult Forums

March 9: "Care in Community in an Era of Cruelty," part 2 of a two-part presentation by Rev. Cody Sanders

March 16: Vestry proposal for restructuring, presented by Pastor Crippen.

March 23: Mount Olive member Nancy Anderson will lead a presentation and discussion about the Iona Community.

March 30 and April 6: Mount Olive member Tom Schattauer will present a 2-part series on the Rites of Triduum and their liturgical history.

Lutheran Advocacy-MN The Everflowing Stream Webinar Series

In a time of rising hatred and division, it can be difficult to simply stay informed, let alone live into our God-given call to civic action. Yet even in chaotic times like these, God still moves. Lutheran Advocacy-MN is proud to present the Overflowing Stream webinar series, a free and nonpartisan opportunity to gather and learn as Christians and citizen advocates. Each webinar will feature a review of ELCA social statements, presentations from experts on the issues, and a Q&A session.

LA-MN invites Mount Olive to join us Tuesdays at 7 pm and let justice roll down.

March 11: Care of Creation

March 18: International Disruption

March 25: Poverty and Hunger

Register here: <https://bit.ly/3EL4yrj>

Cantor Call Committee - Finalist Phase

Recap of past activities:

The application process was started on December 15, 2024 and ended on January 31, 2025. We received over 25 applications, with a wide range of musical interests and backgrounds, with a couple of years of experience to over 60 years of experience.

The Committee reviewed each application thoroughly, and because of digital technology, we were able to not only read resumes, cover letters, and recommendations, but additionally preview candidate videos and livestream links that were submitted along with the application materials. That process resulted in the selection of 4 qualified and talented candidates that the entire committee interviewed between February 13-20.

Latest Updates

On February 24 - the committee met to discuss how to proceed with the finalist phase. We are excited to share that we have one finalist selected and extended an invitation to meet in person March 20-21. Bringing the candidate and family here to Mount Olive will allow us to dedicate time together and ensure we have a great fit.

The itinerary will include social time, time with the choir, interactive hymn singing and discussions to drive mutual discernment - as we want this to be a positive experience and support a clear direction forward for both the candidate and Mount Olive.

This candidate meets or exceeds all the desired characteristics and level of excellence in leading congregational worship in song, improvisation, composition, and connection between liturgy and hymnody. Being transparent and representing you, the congregation, is one of our guiding values - but so is confidentiality. We must continue to afford privacy and respect for not only the candidate's current church community, but also their family in what is a very connected church music universe.

Next Steps - Estimated Timeline

March 20-22: In-person sessions with the Call Committee and Cantorei

Week of March 24: Meet with Vestry (special meeting) to approve the recommendation from the Call Committee

Week of March 31: Communicate with the congregation on outcomes and timing, likely a TWIG or special communication.

April - Timing TBD if the decision is made to call the candidate, a **special congregation meeting will be called for complete review and voting on the Call.**

Feel free to contact anyone on the Call Committee with any questions, feedback or other comments. Your prayers for all involved are welcomed.

Respectfully submitted,

Cantor Call Committee: *Kat Campbell Johnson (chair), Larry Duncan, Robert Farlee, Peggy Hoeft (recorder), Gene Janssen, Rebekah Schulz, Tricia Van Ee Molbert, Cynthia Prosek (Vestry President, ex-officio), and Joseph Crippen (Pastor, ex-officio).*

Congregational Life Updates

Ministry Opportunities:

Please sign up to provide soup for the Wednesday noon and evening meals (see article on page 2). Sunday Coffee hour can use your help, too. Sign up sheets are next to the coffee service window in the East Assembly Room. While there, note our new coffee mugs, compliments of the Mount Olive Foundation. Thank you!

Friday Night Fish Fry Lenten Pilgrimage:

Join others in the Mount Olive Community to check out a variety of Friday Fish Fry events at churches around the metro area. Attend one or all. We'll plan to gather between 5:30 and 6:00. The schedule is below, with the address, and, the church website, which may include information about the menu or advance purchase options. This is a "leader-less" event, so plan to arrive as you can and find others from Mount Olive. Bring cash, as not all these churches accept credit cards.

- **Friday, March 7:** Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 515 Albert St. S., Saint Paul, \$15, 5:00-7:30 p.m. <https://holy-spirit.org/>. The website provides advance ticket sales.
- **Friday, March 14:** Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, 5426 12th Ave. S., Minneapolis, \$17, 5:00-7:00 p.m. <https://olpmn.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1600986>.
- **Friday, March 21:** Nativity of Mary Catholic Church, 9900 Lyndale Avenue South, Bloomington, MN. \$17. 4:30-8:00 p.m. <https://www.nativitybloomington.org>
- **Friday, March 28:** Saint John Vianney Catholic Church,* 789 17th Ave. N., South St. Paul, \$15, 4:00-7:00 p.m. <https://www.sjvssp.org/news>.
- **Friday, April 4:** Church of Saint Matthew, 510 Hall Ave., Saint Paul, \$16, 4:30-7:30 p.m. <https://st-matts.org/lenten-fish-fry-march-7-through-april-18-2025/>.
- **Friday, April 11:** Church of the Annunciation, 509 W. 54th St., Minneapolis, \$12, 5:00-7:00 p.m. <https://www.annunciationmsp.org/church/free-food-distribution>. Includes a pre-paid option.

Mount Olive Card Club:

Remember to indicate your interest in joining others for cards or cribbage. [Use this link!](#) For questions, call Paul Nixdorf at 612/296-0055.

Library Display: Our Vicars—Where Are They Now?

Mount Olive has had fifty-five vicars, or interns, since 1955. In a new display in the Louise Schroedel Memorial Library, thirty vicars tell where they are now, what they're doing, and some things they'll always remember from their vicar year. "Our Vicars – Where Are They Now?" is a project of the Library Committee and got help from many Mount Olive members and friends, especially in finding and connecting with vicars. It's in the library's display case, and most Sundays it also runs on the library's video screen.

No need to rush; the display runs through August 2.

Godly Play Themes for This Week

In Godly Play this Sunday, March 9, Circle One will learn about the Mystery of Easter, while Circle Two will hear about The Greatest Parable without Words.



All children ages 3-Grade 1 are welcome to Circle One, and children in grades 2-5 are welcome to Circle Two.

Love One Another: A day of Music for Children and Youth Choirs

Members of Mount Olive's Children and Youth Choirs will join singers from around the Twin Cities for a day of singing, playing Orff instruments, and making new friends **on Saturday, March 15** (most of Mount Olive's young singers are participating!).

Jennaya Robison, artistic director of the National Lutheran Choir, will conduct the festival Youth Choir and Mari Espeland will conduct the festival Children's Choir. Our own Rebekah Schulz will present a session to choir directors in attendance on supporting neurodivergent learners in your church choir. Sara Lukkasson, music educator at The Blake School, will present Orff sessions for both choir directors and children's choir members.



All are welcome to the culminating Hymn Festival at 2:00 pm, Saturday, March 15 at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, 511 Groveland Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403. We hope to see you there.

March Neighborhood Ministries Partner of the Month:

Sabathani Community Center and Community Emergency Services

In March, we highlight two of our partners that work on issues of food insecurity in our south Minneapolis community as a part of the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign, a state-wide initiative intended to bring together “organizations, businesses, faith communities, and individuals” to raise awareness about the issue of food insecurity and support for local food programs.

“Sabathani Community Center is one of Minnesota’s oldest African American-founded nonprofits... [and] helps equip approximately 32,000 South Minneapolis residents annually” through their food shelf, clothes closet, senior’s programs, workforce initiatives, support for school- age children, and more.



Community Emergency Service or CES, works to alleviate hunger and food insecurity through an on-site food shelf, food delivery programs, a partnership with Meals on Wheels, and its unique Ani-Meals program, providing food for pets and service animals.

We encourage any member who wishes to donate over and above our budgeted amount to those partners doing work in their areas of passion and concern. You can do this using your offering envelopes or our online giving system. All additional contributions to our partner of the month will be distributed to the partner for the month in which the contribution is received.

In addition, we will be collecting donations of non-perishable food items in the cart located in the West Assembly to be divided between our two food shelf partners. However, for those who are able, we strongly encourage monetary donations. Because our food shelf partners have access discounts and bulk purchase opportunities not available to regular consumers, monetary donations allow our partners to purchase much more food than if we were to purchase the same food through a retail store.

For more information about the work of the Sabathani Community Center, please visit their website at sabathani.org. For more information about CES, please visit cesmn.org.

Taste of Chile

On Sunday, Feb. 23, we learned about the amazing work of our supported ministry partner in Chile, Educación Popular En Salud (EPES). If you didn’t hear Karen Anderson’s presentation at the Adult Forum, please watch the recording when it’s available on our YouTube channel. If you would like to add to the Global Ministry Committee’s donation to EPES from the event, you can do that here.

Thank you to those who prepared a dish for the event. If you ended up with an extra casserole dish, please let the office know.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharist: 8 & 10:45 am

Contact Us

Phone: 612/827-5919

On the Web: mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Pastor - *Joseph Crippen*

Interim Organist - *Robert Farlee*

Interim Choir Director - *Andrew Stoebig*

Vicar - *Natalie Wussler*

Administrative Assistant - *Cha Posz*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry -
Jim Bargmann

Sexton - *Jose Morocho*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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